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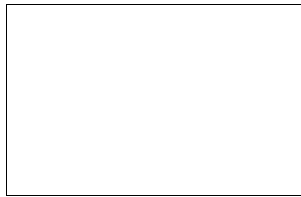
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For Immediate Release

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**Summa Health System to Explore Strategic Partnership
with Leading Healthcare Organization**

Board Evaluating Options to Further Strengthen Health System for the Future



AKRON, Ohio, July 18, 2012 – To further strengthen and enhance healthcare services in the greater Akron community, the Summa Health System Board of Directors has voted to explore a possible strategic partnership with a leading and like-minded healthcare organization.

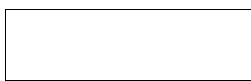
“As a forward-thinking board and leadership team, we routinely evaluate numerous options to improve our organization so that we can preserve local healthcare for the community,” said Norman Wells, Jr., Chairman of the Board of Summa Health System. “Right now, we are considering the establishment of a partnership with another not-for-profit healthcare organization that shares our mission, vision and values.”

Specifically, the Board of Directors authorized a special committee, which includes members of the Board, system leadership and members of the medical staff, to consider partners that would enhance Summa’s strategic objective to:

- Advance the Clinical Enterprise;
- Achieve Effective Integration;
- Grow the Population Base; and
- Strengthen Summa’s financial position in exchange for a minority interest in Summa Health System.

These exploratory discussions with multiple organizations come at a time of strength for Summa Health System. The health system has been approached by several health systems that want to partner with Summa because of its reputation for quality, its leadership position in the healthcare community and its multiple years of excellent operational and financial results.

“Rather than react to inquiries, we have chosen this time to act and to conduct a strategically sound, thoughtful process in order to better understand what options there may be,” said Wells. “This exploration is an extension of our comprehensive strategic planning process, which has multiple initiatives to prepare our organization for a new era of healthcare.”



Partnerships are increasingly the norm in healthcare. The industry faces an environment where it will be more difficult for independent hospitals and health systems to thrive while going at it alone. Healthcare organizations across the country are exploring and entering into strategic partnerships that are beneficial to their organizations and communities. In 2011, nearly 100 hospitals announced affiliations or strategic alliances with other organizations, with even more anticipated in 2012.

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Strategic Partnership

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Summa has a long history of creating innovative partnerships in order to provide the highest quality, compassionate care to its patients and community. The right partner could bring much-needed investment to the hospital and the community, help realize economies of scale in operations and allow Summa to enhance its services, while maintaining local control and autonomy.

"It is our responsibility to the community to proactively explore ways to strengthen the health system's position even further, enhancing our financial stability and allowing us to continue to offer the highest quality, compassionate healthcare services to the people and communities we serve," said Summa President and Chief Executive Officer Thomas Strauss. "We will only pursue a partner that strengthens our organization at all levels and benefits our patients, members, employees, physicians and our community."

Strauss added that the health system is still in an early stage of this process.

"Nothing is definite at this point and no partner has been selected," he said. "We will do our best to keep the community informed as we go."

This exploration phase is likely to continue throughout the remainder of 2012.

Summa Health System is fortunate to have a tremendous amount of momentum underway, as demonstrated by the affirmation of its BBB+ bond rating by Fitch Ratings, the opening of a \$17 million Emergency Department in Green and its ACO's selection by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) to participate in the Medicare Shared Services Program, one of only a handful of Ohio ACOs chosen.

"This is another exciting moment of opportunity for Summa Health System as we thoughtfully evaluate partners to help us transform the delivery of healthcare and to preserve and enhance the level of care for which Summa is known," said Strauss.

About Summa Health System

Summa Health System is one of the largest integrated healthcare delivery systems in Ohio. Encompassing a network of hospitals, community health centers, a health plan, a physician-hospital organization, a multi-specialty physician organization, research and multiple foundations, Summa is nationally renowned for excellence in patient care and for exceptional approaches to healthcare delivery. Summa's clinical services are consistently recognized by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (Magnet status), *U.S. News and World Report*, Thomson Reuters and The Leapfrog Group. Summa also is a founding partner of the Austen BioInnovation Institute in Akron. For more information, visit www.summahealth.org or find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/summahealth and Twitter at www.twitter.com/summahealth.